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POLICY TOWARDS NATIONALITIES

OF THE

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

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GENERAL PROGRAMME OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF REGIONAL AUTONOMY FOR NATIONALITIES

Promulgated by the Central People's Government on August 9, 1952

CHAPTER I

GENERAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 1

This General Programme is drawn up in accordance with the provisions of Articles 9, 50, 51, 52, and 53 of the Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.[1]

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[1]Article 9. All nationalities within the boundaries of the People's Republic of China shall have equal rights and duties.

Article 50. All nationalities within the boundaries of the People's Republic of China are equal. They shall establish unity and mutual aid among themselves, and shall oppose imperialism and public enemies in their midst so that the People's Republic of China will become a big fraternal and co-operative family comprising all its nationalities. Greater nationalism and local nationalism shall be opposed. Actions involving discrimination, oppression and splitting the unity of the various nationalities shall be prohibited.

Article 51. Regional autonomy shall be exercised in areas where national minorities are concentrated, and various kinds of autonomous organs for the different nationalities shall be set up according to the size of the respective populations and regions. In places where different nationalities live together and in the autonomous areas of the national minorities, the different nationalities shall each have an appropriate number of representatives in the local organs of state power.

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ARTICLE 2

Each national autonomous region is an integral part of the territory of the People's Republic of China. The autonomous organ of each national autonomous region is a local government led by the people's government of the next higher level, under the unified leadership of the Central People's Government.

ARTICLE 3

The Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference is the general line along which all nationalities of the People's Republic of China unite in their common struggle at the present stage. In administering the internal affairs of their own nationality, the people in each national autonomous region shall advance along this general line.

CHAPTER II

AUTONOMOUS REGIONS

ARTICLE 4

In areas where national minorities are concentrated, the following types of autonomous regions

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Article 52. All national minorities within the boundaries of the People's Republic of China shall have the right to join the People's Liberation Army, and to organize local people's public security forces in accordance with the unified military system of the state.

Article 53. All national minorities shall have freedom to develop their spoken and written languages, to preserve or reform their traditions, customs and religious beliefs. The people's government shall assist the broad masses of all national minorities to develop their political, economic, cultural, and educational construction work.

may be established according to the relations obtaining between the nationalities of the locality and to the conditions of local economic development, with due consideration of the historical background:

(1) Autonomous regions established on the basis of an area inhabited by one national minority.

(2) Autonomous regions established on the basis of an area inhabited by one large national minority, including certain areas inhabited by other national minorities with very small populations who, likewise, shall enjoy regional autonomy.

(3) Autonomous regions jointly established on the basis of two or more areas, each inhabited by a different national minority. Whether a separate national autonomous region will be established in each of these areas depends on the actual conditions in the respective areas and on the wishes of the nationalities concerned.

ARTICLE 5

According to the economic, political and other requirements of the locality and with due consideration of the historical background, each national autonomous region may include some districts, towns or cities inhabited by Hans (the largest of the nationalities in China otherwise known as Chinese—Translator). In localities within a national autonomous region where the Hans are concentrated, no regional autonomy is necessary, but the organs of state power there shall be of the type generally adopted in the rest of the country. However, in localities within a national autonomous region where the number of

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Hans is exceptionally large, a democratic-coalition government of nationalities shall be established.

ARTICLE 6

The boundaries of each national autonomous region shall be properly demarcated, in accordance with the provisions of Articles 4 and 5 of this General Programme. If it is not possible properly to demarcate the boundaries of an autonomous region at the time of its establishment, temporary arrangements may be made, pending future readjustments.

ARTICLE 7

The administrative status of a national autonomous region shall correspond to that of a *hsiang* (or village), district, county, special region or a higher level, depending on the size of its population, its area and other factors.

ARTICLE 8

In designating a national autonomous region, the name of the nationality shall be prefixed with the geographical denomination. Exceptions are permitted in special cases.

ARTICLE 9

In demarcating and readjusting the boundaries of a national autonomous region and in deciding its administrative status and its name, proposals shall be brought forward through consultation between the people's government of the next higher level and the representatives of the nationality or nationalities concerned. These proposals shall be submitted to the people's government of the next higher level for approval. In the case of a national autonomous

region of county level or above, these proposals shall be submitted to the Government Administration Council of the Central People's Government for ratification. All proposals, approved by the local people's governments of different levels, shall be submitted through successive levels to the Government Administration Council for registration.

CHAPTER III

AUTONOMOUS ORGANS

ARTICLE 10

The autonomous organ of a national autonomous region is the organ of state power of the people in that region.

ARTICLE 11

The autonomous organ of a national autonomous region shall be set up according to the basic principles of democratic centralism and of the system of people's congresses.

ARTICLE 12

The people's government in a national autonomous region shall be composed mainly of members from the nationality or nationalities exercising regional autonomy, with the participation of an appropriate number of members from other national minorities and the Hans inhabiting the same region.

ARTICLE 13

The question as to which higher organ the autonomous organ of a national autonomous region

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shall be subordinated to shall be determined by the administrative status of the said region. Exceptions may be made in special cases.

CHAPTER IV

RIGHTS TO AUTONOMY

ARTICLE 14

The actual form which the autonomous organ of a national autonomous region is to take shall be determined in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the nationality or nationalities exercising regional autonomy and the wishes of the local leaders who are associated with the people.

ARTICLE 15

The autonomous organ of a national autonomous region may adopt the language most commonly used in the region as the chief medium of intercourse in the exercise of its authority. But when the autonomous organ exercises its authority over a nationality to whom this language is unfamiliar the language of the latter nationality shall also be adopted.

ARTICLE 16

The autonomous organ of a national autonomous region may adopt the spoken and written language of the nationality (or nationalities) of the region for developing their culture and education.

ARTICLE 17

The autonomous organ of a national autonomous region may take necessary steps to train cadres from

among the nationalities in the region who have a highly developed sense of patriotism and close contact with the local population.

ARTICLE 18

Internal reforms shall be carried out in a national autonomous region in accordance with the wishes of the majority of its people and of the local leaders who are associated with the people.

ARTICLE 19

The autonomous organ of a national autonomous region may, subject to the unified financial control of the state, administer the region's finances within a sphere prescribed by the Central People's Government and the local people's governments above its level.

ARTICLE 20

The autonomous organ of a national autonomous region may freely develop the region's economy in accordance with the unified economic system and plan for economic construction of the state.

ARTICLE 21

The autonomous organ of a national autonomous region may take necessary and appropriate steps to develop the culture, education, arts, and health services of the various nationalities inhabiting the region.

ARTICLE 22

The autonomous organ of a national autonomous region may organize its own local security forces and militia within the unified military system of the state.

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ARTICLE 23

In compliance with the provisions of the laws and decrees of the Central People's Government and the local people's governments of higher levels, and within the limits of its autonomous jurisdiction, the autonomous organ of a national autonomous region may draw up special regulations for the region, which shall be submitted for approval to the people's governments of the two next higher levels. Such special regulations, when approved by the local people's governments of higher levels, shall be submitted through successive levels to the Government Administration Council of the Central People's Government for registration.

ARTICLE 24

The above-enumerated rights to autonomy shall, in principle, apply to all national autonomous regions; the scope of their application shall depend on the administrative status of the national autonomous region concerned.

CHAPTER V

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE NATIONALITIES OF AN AUTONOMOUS REGION

ARTICLE 25

The autonomous organ of a national autonomous region shall protect the right to national equality of all nationalities in the region; educate the people of different nationalities to respect each other's languages, both spoken and written, customs, traditions and religious beliefs; and prohibit national

discrimination and oppression, and all acts liable to provoke disputes between nationalities.

ARTICLE 26

The autonomous organ of a national autonomous region shall guarantee to all people in the region, irrespective of nationality, freedom of thought, speech, publication, assembly, association, correspondence, person, domicile, change of domicile, religious belief, and the freedom to hold processions and demonstrations, as stipulated in the Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, and the right to elect and to be elected according to law.

ARTICLE 27

The autonomous organ of a national autonomous region shall, in accordance with the provisions of Article 4 of this General Programme, help the other national minority or minorities concentrated in the region to practise regional autonomy.

ARTICLE 28

The autonomous organ of a national autonomous region shall enter into full consultation with representatives of other nationality or nationalities living in the region on all problems relating particularly to that nationality or nationalities.

ARTICLE 29

The autonomous organ of a national autonomous region shall educate and guide the people living in the region towards unity and mutual assistance between all nationalities of the country, and towards love for the People's Republic of China in which all

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nationalities live together in a spirit of fraternity and co-operation like one big family.

CHAPTER VI

PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP FOR THE PEOPLE'S GOVERNMENTS OF HIGHER LEVELS

ARTICLE 30

The people's governments of higher levels shall respect the rights to autonomy of the national autonomous regions and help to put them into practice.

ARTICLE 31

The people's governments of higher levels shall make an adequate appraisal of the special characteristics and actual conditions of each national autonomous region at the present stage of development, so that their directives and orders will conform both to the general line as laid down in the Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and to these special characteristics and actual conditions.

ARTICLE 32

The people's governments of higher levels shall assist the autonomous organs of the national autonomous regions in the planned training of cadres from among the nationalities in the area, and assign suitable cadres for work in the autonomous regions according to requirements.

ARTICLE 33

The people's governments of higher levels shall assist the national autonomous regions in their

political, economic, cultural, and educational development, as well as in the expansion of health services.

ARTICLE 34

The people's governments of higher levels shall take appropriate measures to acquaint the people of the national autonomous regions with the advanced experiences and conditions about political, economic, and cultural development.

ARTICLE 35

The people's governments of higher levels shall educate and assist the people of all nationalities in observing an attitude of equality, fraternity, unity, and mutual assistance among the nationalities, and in overcoming all tendencies to domination by the majority nationality or to narrow nationalism.

CHAPTER VII

SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 36

Except for areas where regional autonomy is already being practised, preparations for regional autonomy shall be made in all areas throughout the country where national minorities are concentrated, where the initial stage of revolutionary order has been established, and where regional autonomy is the common desire of all sections of the people. Such preparations shall include the establishment of preparatory organizations, or utilization of existing appropriate organizations, for the convocation of

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people's representative conferences and other necessary measures.

ARTICLE 37

In dealing with the special cases referred to in Article 8 of this General Programme concerning the designating of a national autonomous region and in Article 13 concerning the subordination of the autonomous organ of a national autonomous region to a higher organ, proposals shall be made by the people's government of provincial (or sub-provincial) or Greater Administrative Area level, or by the people's government of the autonomous region of a corresponding level, and submitted for approval to the Government Administration Council of the Central People's Government. Such cases may also be dealt with directly by the Government Administration Council.

ARTICLE 38

Measures for the implementation of regional autonomy in districts inhabited by national minorities within cities populated mainly by Hans shall be separately drawn up by the Government Administration Council of the Central People's Government, in accordance with the basic spirit of the present General Programme.

ARTICLE 39

This General Programme, proposed at the enlarged second session of the Commission of Nationalities Affairs of the Central People's Government, shall be put into practice after adoption by the Government Administration Council of the Central People's Government at an administrative meeting,

and after approval by the Central People's Government Council.

ARTICLE 40

The right of interpretation and amendment of this General Programme rests with the Central People's Government.

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DECISIONS ON MEASURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LOCAL DEMOCRATIC-COALITION GOVERNMENTS OF NATIONALITIES

Adopted by the Government Administration Council of the Central People's Government on February 22, 1952

In accordance with the basic spirit of the policy towards nationalities, as laid down in the Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, democratic-coalition governments of nationalities may be established in the following areas:

1. A province (or sub-province), municipality, special region, county, district, *hsiang* (or village) where the Han people constitute the overwhelming majority of the local population, while the people of national minorities make up 10 per cent or more of the population;

2. A province (or sub-province), municipality, special region, county, district, *hsiang* (or village) where the people of national minorities constitute less than 10 per cent of the local population, but where relations between the different nationalities are such as may affect the local administration in various aspects;

3. An area where the inhabitants belong to two or more national minorities, but joint autonomy is not being practised;

4. A locality within a national autonomous region where the Han inhabitants are exceptionally numerous;

5. Any other locality where, for some special reason, the establishment of a democratic-coalition government of nationalities is deemed necessary and is approved by the people's government of a Greater Administrative Area or by the Government Administration Council of the Central People's Government.

The purpose of establishing a local democratic-coalition government of nationalities is to safeguard the right of the national minorities to equality in the local organ of state power. The name of the people's government need not thus be changed.

Each democratic-coalition government of nationalities is a form of state power at a local level. The general regulations, promulgated by the Central People's Government, governing the organization of the people's representative conferences and of the people's governments in provinces, municipalities, counties, districts, *hsiang* (or villages) shall, in general, apply to the organization of such bodies in areas where there are democratic-coalition governments, with the following supplementary provisions.

I. REGARDING THE PEOPLE'S REPRESENTATIVE CONFERENCES

1. The number of representatives from the different nationalities to the local people's representative conference shall be appropriately determined and allotted through consultation, on the basis of the ratio in population of the different nationalities in the given area. Due consideration shall be given to any national minority with an exceptionally small population.

2. Representatives from the different nationalities to the local people's representative conference may, according to actual relations between the

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nationalities in the area, be elected or appointed either separately or jointly by the people of the different nationalities.

3. The number and choice of members of the consultative committees, or the standing committees of the people's representative conferences, shall be decided through full consultation, with due consideration given to nationalities with relatively small populations.

The chairman of a consultative or standing committee may, according to conditions among the various nationalities, have a deputy or deputies.

4. Representatives from the different nationalities shall have the right to use their own national languages, both spoken and written, at meetings of the people's representative conferences, or their consultative or standing committees. At such meetings, the important reports, documents and addresses shall be translated, as far as possible, into the languages of all the participating nationalities, or else interpreters shall be provided.

5. The people's representative conferences shall attach the same importance to proposals and opinions put forward by representatives from national minorities as they do to those submitted by other representatives. Decisions on specific problems concerning a certain national minority shall be made only after agreement has been reached through full consultation with representatives from that national minority.

II. REGARDING THE PEOPLE'S GOVERNMENT

1. The number and choice of members of the people's government councils shall be decided through

full consultation, with due consideration given to nationalities with relatively small populations.

The chairman of a people's government may, according to conditions among the nationalities in the area, have a deputy or several deputies.

2. The people's government councils shall respect the functions and powers of members from national minorities and shall, in particular, consult with them fully on questions concerning national minorities.

3. The various departments of the people's governments shall endeavour to absorb personnel of national minority origin into their work; they shall assist them in every manner, with proper consideration for their ways of life.

4. The people's governments shall, in the exercise of their functions and powers, adopt as far as possible the languages of local nationalities.

5. The people's governments shall introduce regional autonomy for nationalities to areas under their jurisdiction where people of national minorities are concentrated, in accordance with the General Programme of the People's Republic of China for the Implementation of Regional Autonomy for Nationalities.

6. The people's governments shall fully guarantee the right to national equality to the nationalities in areas under their jurisdiction; inculcate in the people of each nationality respect for the customs, traditions and religious beliefs of other nationalities; promote unity and mutual assistance among the nationalities; and outlaw national discrimination, oppression, or any act tending to provoke dissension between nationalities.

7. Within the limits of law and the decrees of the Central People's Government, as well as of the

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local people's governments of higher levels, local peo
ple's governments may draw up special regulation
suited to the conditions among the nationalities i
the areas under their jurisdiction. Such speci
regulations shall be submitted for approval to th
people's governments of the two next higher level
and for registration through successive levels to th
Government Administration Council of the Centra
People's Government.

DECISIONS ON THE PROTECTION OF THE RIGHT OF ALL SCATTERED NATIONAL MINORITY PEOPLE TO NATIONAL EQUALITY

Adopted by the Government Administration Council of the Central People's Government on February 22, 1952

For various historical reasons, many members of certain national minorities in China have lived for many years or even generations scattered in areas, mostly cities and towns, populated by the Han people. For years subjected to national oppression and discrimination under reactionary rule, a good number of them were compelled to hide their national characteristics, conceal or change their nationality, in order to be able to continue their existence. The establishment of the People's Republic of China put an end to national oppression, while national equality was put in its place. In order to safeguard the right of all such scattered members of national minorities to national equality, the following decisions have been made:

1. In accordance with the provisions of Articles 5 and 9 of the Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, all scattered members of national minorities shall enjoy the same right to freedom of thought, speech, publication, assembly, association, correspondence, person, domicile, change of domicile, and religious beliefs, as well as the freedom to hold processions and demonstrations,

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as the Han people in the locality. No one shall be permitted to discriminate against them.

2. All scattered members of national minorities shall, according to law, have the right to elect and to be elected. In localities where their number is comparatively large, the local people's governments may take proper steps to enable their representatives to take part in the organs of state power; shall see to it that proposals and opinions concerning national minorities receive the same attention as other proposals and opinions; and shall fully consult with representatives of a national minority on specific problems concerning it.

3. All scattered members of national minorities shall have the freedom to preserve or change their national ways of life, their religious beliefs, their national customs and habits in social life, in factories, schools, people's organizations, government offices or military units. This freedom shall be respected and given full consideration without interference from any quarter.

4. All scattered members of national minorities shall have the right to join any people's organizations in their locality and to engage in any trade or profession they like. They shall not be refused or discriminated against because of their nationality by any people's organization or in any trade or profession.

5. All scattered members of national minorities who have their own language, spoken or written, may use it in all legal proceedings in the courts.

6. All scattered members of national minorities shall have the right to bring charges before the people's governments against acts of national discrimination, oppression or insult perpetrated against them. The people's governments of all levels shall handle

such charges in a responsible manner and mete out punishment in accordance with the law whenever such acts are of a serious nature.

7. All scattered members of national minorities who are faced with insurmountable difficulties in the enjoyment of their right to national equality may ask their local people's government for assistance.

8. The principles of these Decisions apply equally to members of national minorities scattered in autonomous regions of other national minorities and to the Han people scattered in such regions.

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RELATIONS AMONG NATIONALITIES[1]

Chou En-lai

Premier of the Government Administration Council

Regarding nationalities affairs, it is, first of all, worth pointing out that the Agreement on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet is now beginning to be put into operation. Units of the People's Liberation Army have entered the city of Lhasa and received a warm welcome from the Tibetan people. This is a great victory for Chairman Mao Tse-tung's policy towards nationalities.

In the course of the past one year and more, the Central People's Government has dispatched visiting missions to regions populated by national minorities, and delegates of national minorities have also come to Peking for meetings and other purposes. These and other activities have served to strengthen further the ties between the Central People's Government and the various nationalities, and stimulated the latter's understanding of their great Motherland. The growth of the movement to resist U.S. aggression and aid Korea has further added to the education in patriotism among our national minorities whose overwhelming majority deeply love and warmly support Chairman Mao Tse-tung and the Central People's Government. The long-standing disunity and antagonism of the past between the nationalities and within each one of them has now given way to unity and co-operation.

1 Extracts from the political report delivered by Premier Chou En-lai on October 23, 1951 at the Third Session of the First National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

Regional autonomy for nationalities, and democratic-coalition governments of nationalities, are now being established step by step. Excluding Inner Mongolia, altogether 30 people's governments of national autonomous regions and 51 democratic-coalition governments of nationalities have been established, ranging from special region to *hsiang* level. These governments have, on the whole, achieved excellent results.

The state trading agencies are trying in various ways to extend their spheres of work in national minority regions. As far as possible they initiate a policy of trading at parity prices, or even at subsidized prices, to organize the exchange of goods. As a result, prices for local products have generally been raised three or four times and even as much as over ten times.

The Ministry of Public Health of the Central People's Government and the various local people's governments concerned have dispatched many medical and anti-epidemic teams to work in minority regions, or have helped the national minorities to establish their own medical and health organizations. These teams have been enthusiastically welcomed by the national minorities.

At the moment, we have only limited capacity to restore and develop cultural and educational work among national minorities. Nevertheless, the Central People's Government and the various local people's governments concerned have all done their best to train cadres for national minorities. We have now more than 50,000 cadres of national minority origin who are withdrawn from production to engage in full-time work among the national minorities in various parts of the country.

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All this is only the beginning—a good one at that—of the fundamental solution of the national question in our country.

At present, we should pay attention to the following points in our work:

(A) In accordance with the basic principles of democratic centralism and the system of people's representative conferences, we should everywhere effect the full application of the policy of regional autonomy for nationalities, and of the democratic-coalition governments of nationalities. The autonomous rights of the national autonomous regions should be appropriately defined. The forms of national autonomous organs must suit the present stage of development of the respective nationalities, and we must not simply transfer the system adopted in areas populated by the Han people to areas populated by national minorities.

(B) We should make more efforts to extend trade and health facilities in the national minority regions.

(C) We should in all regions populated by national minorities spread and deepen their education in patriotism and the movement to resist U.S. aggression and aid Korea; we should rehabilitate and develop stage by stage their cultural and educational facilities, and especially establish and develop, in a planned manner and on a selective basis, journalistic and publishing facilities.

(D) Everywhere we should continue to carry out extensively the policy of training cadres from among national minorities, strengthen their political and ideological education, and acquaint them with the policies of our Government, so that they can competently deal with their day-to-day tasks and give proper leadership.

(E) Appropriate reforms within a nationality are a necessary stage through which it must pass, in order to develop and progress and reach the level of the more advanced nationalities. But these reforms must suit the characteristics of the present stage of development of the nationality concerned. They must accord with the will of the majority of people of the nationality concerned. To carry out these reforms, suitable measures must be adopted and the cadres of the nationality concerned relied on.

(F) We should continue to educate the Han people, especially the Han cadres, to seriously respect in all ways the right to national equality of national minorities, the opinions of their people, and to eliminate the dominant-nation (Great Han) chauvinist influences of various kinds. At the same time, the national minorities themselves must constantly aim to overcome tendencies of narrow nationalism, secure the help of the Han and other more advanced nationalities, study the experiences gained by these nationalities, and induce their own cadres to work for the good of their nationality.

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SOME QUESTIONS CONCERNING POLICY TOWARDS NATIONALITIES[1]

Li Wei-han
Chairman of the Commission of Nationalities Affairs

Members of the Commission, Delegates, Comrades:

I am in agreement with Vice-Premier Tung Pi-wu's political report made at our meeting, with Vice-Chairman Liu Ke-ping's report on our work among the nationalities during the past two years, and with Vice-Chairman Ulanfu's report on work in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region.

Premier Chou En-lai's appraisal and instructions in respect to the relations among all the nationalities in China, as stated in his political report of October 23, 1951 to the Third Session of the First National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, constitute the guiding principles in our discussion of the various matters concerning nationalities at this meeting.

In the following I submit for your discussion my views on some of the questions concerning policy towards nationalities. Please correct me where I am wrong.

I. RELATIONS AMONG NATIONALITIES AND OUR TASK ARISING FROM THE NATIONAL QUESTION

China is a big, multi-national country whose various nationalities, the Han people as well as all

1 Outline of a report made on December 21, 1951 at an Enlarged Meeting of the Second Session of the Commission of Nationalities Affairs.

national minorities, have through their tireless labour developed production, created their own history and culture, and made important contributions towards building up their great homeland. Economic co-operation and cultural exchange are the result of contacts of long standing between them. At different times, they jointly resisted foreign aggression. Imperialist encroachments on China during these last hundred years made the various nationalities feel that they were in the same boat. The national democratic revolutionary movement led by the Chinese Communist Party during the past thirty years, in particular, has systematically brought about greater unity among them.

In the long course of development of our country's different nationalities, the Han people, who constitute more than 90 per cent of the population, advanced far ahead of the other nationalities in the military, political, economic and cultural fields. They played the leading role in the country's life; they constituted the decisive factor for progress in the formation of our country, particularly in the founding of the People's Republic of China. They are bound also to render significant assistance in the future advancement of the various fraternal nationalities.

However, for a long period in our history national oppression resulted in the inequality between nationalities. Ever since imperialism began its aggression on China, the Chinese ruling class, and especially, in latter days, the reactionary Kuomintang clique headed by Chiang Kai-shek, because of their ruthless oppression and exploitation of Han people and national minorities alike, made themselves the common enemy of all nationalities.

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Under the leadership of Chairman Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Communist Party, this common enemy was overthrown two years ago by the great people's revolution and War of Liberation, initiated and expanded among the Hans but joined in by the people of many national minorities. Thus not only the Han people, but all national minorities on the mainland of China, were liberated. Founded on October 1, 1949, the People's Republic of China is a state of people's democratic dictatorship led by the working class, a state in which many nationalities live together in fraternal co-operation like one big family. Relations among the nationalities of China are therefore radically changed: the era of national oppression has given way to an era of national equality. Consequently, our task arising from the national question has also undergone a fundamental change. Our task is no longer to help national minorities in their strivings for liberation from national oppression. Our task is to assist them to realize complete national equality; to assist them, first of all, to raise themselves to the level of New Democracy and to bring about improvements in their material and cultural life. In order to accomplish this task, we must implement the provisions of the Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference the essence of which is as follows:

to ensure that all national minorities enjoy the right of national equality, that is to say, equal rights in every respect for all nationalities;

to implement the policy of regional autonomy for nationalities and of democratic coalition governments for nationalities;

to help the nationalities develop politically, economically, culturally and educationally;

to consolidate the unity among the various nationalities as well as within each nationality;

to eradicate whatever influences of imperialist aggression and remnants of counter-revolutionary forces which still exist within the country;

to intensify patriotic education simultaneously with education in internationalism among all nationalities;

to oppose domination by the majority nationality as well as manifestations of narrow nationalism, so that all nationalities will be united in the common task of building their great country.

As Vice-Chairman Liu Ke-ping has already made clear in his report, the efforts expanded in different fields during the past two years mark a good beginning in carrying out these basic tasks.

II. REGIONAL AUTONOMY FOR NATIONALITIES

Regional autonomy for nationalities is the fundamental policy established by Chairman Mao Tse-tung in applying the Marxist-Leninist theory to solving China's national question. This policy enjoys the whole-hearted support of people of the various nationalities. The experiences of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region and other national autonomous regions prove that this policy is the key to the solution of China's national question.

Regional autonomy for nationalities is practised within the People's Republic of China under the unified leadership of the Central People's Government. It follows the general line of the Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Con-

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ference, with areas where national minorities are concentrated as its basis. (To take the proportion of national minority inhabitants in the total population of a given area as the basis for regional autonomy is an incorrect method contravening the stipulations of the Common Programme.) This is the general principle and major prerequisite that must, in all circumstances, be adhered to.

Any national minority living in a compact community is entitled to regional autonomy for nationalities and has the right to establish an autonomous region and autonomous organ, in accordance with this general principle and major prerequisite. Any national minority has the right to administer its own internal affairs in conformity with the wishes of the great majority of its own people and of the leaders in touch with the people. It is the right of every national minority to be the master of its own affairs. Assistance must be given to each national minority in order to facilitate the exercise of this right. This principle, too, must be adhered to strictly.

The establishment of national autonomous regions involves questions regarding national composition, boundary lines, administrative status, autonomous organs, autonomous rights, internal relations, and organizational relations between higher and lower levels.

The national autonomous regions already established may be classified generally into three types:

An autonomous region established on the basis of an area inhabited by one national minority (for example, the autonomous region of the Tibetans in Pingwu, northern Szechuan Province); an autonomous region established on the basis of an area inhabited by one large national minority but including areas in-

habited by other nationalities with comparatively very small populations (for example, the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region); an autonomous region jointly established on the basis of areas inhabited by several national minorities (for example, the joint autonomous region at Lungsheng, Kwangsi Province, where the Tung, Chuang, Miao, Yao and Ling national minorities live together). There will possibly be other types.

These differing types of national autonomous regions have come into existence on account of differences in the existing relations among nationalities, in economic conditions, in historical relations, but are all based on the people's free will and national equality. The third type of regional autonomy may be established in areas where members of different national minorities live side by side with the advantage of fostering co-operation and mutual aid among nationalities and, therefore, assisting in their development. All must be done without compulsion and according to the principle of free will, equality and mutual benefit.

In some areas of national minority concentration which adjoin or overlap areas inhabited by the Han people, the establishment of regional autonomy necessitates—for economic, political and historical reasons—the inclusion of districts and towns inhabited by the Han people, so that in some cases the Han people constitute a majority among the population. Such inclusion is permissible as it is beneficial to the cause of unity among the various nationalities and, above all, helpful to the development of these autonomous regions. In such cases, subject to the wishes of the national minorities concerned, steps should be taken to encourage and persuade the Han people to join the autonomous regions. But in areas within such auton-

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omous regions where the Han people are especially numerous, democratic-coalition governments of nationalities should be set up.

National composition in all the above-mentioned types of national autonomous regions is a complex and serious problem which must be properly dealt with according to actual conditions in the different places. The leaders of the national minorities concerned must be consulted and the approval of their people secured. This problem should never be handled carelessly.

The proper solution of the problem of national composition in an autonomous region will facilitate the fixing of the boundaries and administrative status of the said region. Decisions of a provisional character on boundary lines should be permitted, so as to avoid any rash action or delay in this matter. The administrative status of an autonomous region may be decided, in principle, according to the size of population and area of the said region.

The steps to be taken in preparation for establishing autonomous regions for nationalities are governed by actual conditions at a given time and place; they need not, indeed cannot, be the same everywhere. Actual conditions prevailing in the area concerned govern also the decision whether to establish a local democratic-coalition government of nationalities first and then set up a national autonomous region. But preparations should be made, and the establishment of regional autonomy for nationalities effected whenever conditions are favourable, for instance, when revolutionary order within the area has just been established and regional autonomy is the desire of all strata of the people.

An autonomous organ is a local organ of state power, the level of which corresponds to the administrative status of the autonomous region in question. It is the organ of state power established by and for the people of the autonomous region. Such organs must be organized and established in accordance with the basic principle of democratic centralism and the system of people's congresses. Their concrete form, however, must accord with the wishes of the majority of the people of the nationalities exercising regional autonomy and with the wishes of the leaders who are in touch with the people, so as to do justice to the national minorities in their present stage of development. Such a form will be easily understood and accepted by the people of nationalities that are to enjoy regional autonomy.

The autonomous organs should be composed mainly of members from the nationalities exercising regional autonomy with the participation of an appropriate number of representatives from the other nationalities living within the autonomous region concerned.

The Han people living in autonomous regions are a component part of the Han nationality of the entire country; there is, therefore, no need for them to practise regional autonomy, no matter how large their population in a given autonomous region may be. But their political system must conform with the general system of the whole country, and their political rights and ways of life should be respected in the same way as those of other nationalities in autonomous regions.

All nationalities in autonomous regions have the right to adopt and develop their own national languages, both spoken and written, and to use them in developing their culture and education. An autono-

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mous organ may adopt as the chief medium in exercising its authority the language that is generally accepted within the region, but in exercising authority over a nationality unacquainted with this language, the language of the latter nationality should be used concurrently.

Under our unified state system and plan, the various national autonomous organs enjoy the right to exercise local autonomy in economy, finance, culture and education, as well as the right to organize local people's armed forces, according to their respective administrative status. The Central People's Government, or local people's governments of a level higher than the national autonomous organ concerned, will formulate rules governing the exercise of these rights according to prevailing actual conditions, and facilitate their implementation.

Within their jurisdiction the autonomous organs of national autonomous regions may formulate special regulations which should be submitted to the people's governments at the two next higher levels for approval.

In order to keep the Central People's Government posted on actual conditions in the various national autonomous regions throughout the country and thus to enable it to give better guidance in the exercise of autonomous rights, the rules governing autonomous rights in the autonomous regions, and the special regulations approved by the competent people's governments of higher levels, should be sent through successive levels to the Government Administration Council to be put on record. This procedure will prove advantageous, at least for some time to come.

The exercise of autonomous rights, the consolidation of the autonomous organs, and the general development of the autonomous regions are dependent

on fraternal co-operation among the nationalities, on the constantly rising political consciousness and readiness for organization of the people of different nationalities, and on the leadership and help of the people's governments at higher levels. All these factors make the autonomous organs of national autonomous regions responsible for safeguarding the right to national equality of all nationalities and for prohibiting any kind of national discrimination. At the same time, they must safeguard the civil rights and the right to elect and to be elected of the people of all nationalities under their jurisdiction, irrespective of sex. The autonomous organs must inculcate in the people a sense of patriotism and internationalism and respect the leadership of the people's governments of higher levels.

In leading the autonomous regions, the governments of higer levels must respect the autonomous rights of these regions, help them develop politically, economically, and culturally, help them improve education and health services, and help them train government functionaries. They should also send cadres to work in the autonomous regions according to necessity. As to the method of leadership, the people's governments of higher levels should properly appraise the peculiarities and actual conditions of the various national minorities at the present stage of development so that orders and decrees issued will conform to the basic spirit of the Common Programme and, at the same time, be compatible with the peculiarities and actual circumstances of the nationalities. The practice of transplanting arbitrarily experiences and methods from other areas should be guarded against and, where necessary, corrected.

Matters should be explained so that whatever doubts or misconceptions about the meaning of regional autonomy may be dispelled. Below are samples of questions asked:

Now that national oppression is gone and national equality has taken its place, the question is only one of democracy among the nationalities themselves; what need is there for regional autonomy?

Now that cadres of national minority origin have already assumed responsible positions in the organs of state power, does that not already mean regional autonomy?

Should national minorities living in compact communities whose social and economic practices are similar to those of the Han people, or national minorities who have no language of their own, also practise regional autonomy?

Why can't regional autonomy be based on the proportion of the people of national minorities in the total population of a given area? Is it necessary to practise regional autonomy in national minority areas where the administrative status is of the basic level?

Is the implementation of regional autonomy beneficial to the political, economic and cultural development of the national minorities? Will emphasis on national forms not encourage narrow nationalism?

These constitute one type of questions which tend to hinder a smooth implementation of the policy of regional autonomy.

Then there are still other questions:

Why must regional autonomy be practised under the leadership of the people's government of higher levels and not independently?

Is democracy necessary in an autonomous region?

Why should national equality be the accepted government policy within an autonomous region, why can't the nationalities exercising regional autonomy administer their own affairs?

Are democratic-coalition governments of nationalities not superfluous in localities within autonomous regions where the Han people are especially numerous?

Why is it necessary to wipe out the remnant Kuomintang reactionaries and the influences of the aggressive imperialist powers?

What will be the advantage of improved relations with nationalities outside the autonomous regions? Why should we assimilate the experiences of the more advanced nationalities and obtain their co-operation?

These represent another type of questions which tend to hamper the correct implementation of the policy of regional autonomy.

III. LOCAL DEMOCRATIC-COALITION GOVERNMENT OF NATIONALITIES

Each local democratic-coalition government of nationalities is an organ of state power, which ensures to all nationalities equal rights in the exercise of state power in areas where different nationalities live together and thus facilitates the implementation of the basic policy of co-operation among, and development of, the various nationalities. Experience has shown that such governments play a beneficial role in meeting the demand of national minorities for exercising state power, stimulate the people of national minorities to take an active part in the administration of state affairs, strengthen the unity among nationalities, help the practice of regional

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autonomy, and accelerate whatever work that is in progress in these areas.

An important point is that the number of representatives from each nationality to the people's representative conferences must be based on the proportion of their respective populations and must be equitably allotted, with due consideration for nationalities with very small populations. Representatives may be elected or appointed separately or jointly by the various nationalities. A decision on any question concerning one of the national minorities should be made only after full consultation with the representatives of that minority and after their concurrence has been obtained.

The government councils of democratic-coalition governments of nationalities and their corresponding consultative committees of the people's representative conferences should, as far as possible, include representatives from all national minorities under their jurisdiction; they should, in discharging their responsibilities, adhere in spirit to the same principle of consultation.

In what areas should democratic-coalition governments of nationalities be established? We are of opinion that they should be set up in provinces (subprovinces), municipalities, special regions, counties, districts, and *hsiang* (villages), where the Han people constitute the overwhelming majority of the population, while national minorities constitute 10 per cent or more; or where the population of the national minorities is less than 10 per cent but where the various nationalities very obviously have dealings with one another affecting the administration in many respects. Democratic-coalition governments of nationalities may also be established in areas inhabited by

two or more national minorities where joint autonomy is not yet in practice and in districts within national autonomous regions where the Han people are especially numerous.

In general, a local democratic-coalition government of nationalities includes one or more national autonomous regions within its jurisdiction. On the other hand, an autonomous region of a high administrative level may include one or more democratic-coalition governments of nationalities of a low administrative level. These principles apply generally to relations between the governments of different levels and to the exercise of leadership by the people's governments of higher levels.

A proposal has been made that any local people's government practising the system of democratic-coalition government of nationalities should indicate this fact in its name. We deem such change unnecessary.

IV. NATIONAL MINORITY ELEMENTS LIVING AMONG OTHER NATIONALITIES

For various historical reasons, national minority elements have for a long period been living among the inhabitants of the Han nationality (mainly among city inhabitants). They have long been under Han influence and subjected to national oppression and discrimination. As a result, they have lost most of their original national characteristics; some have even been concealing their national identity on purpose. Nonetheless, they have retained their national sentiments to a larger or lesser degree.

Since the liberation, the implementation of the policy of the Central People's Government in respect

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to nationalities has had its influence in awakenin
these forgotten elements of national minorities. The
have begun to raise their heads again, demanding th
right to national equality. Although they are no
free from national oppression, in a number of place
they still meet with discrimination.

It is, therefore, necessary that protection b
given them by law to ensure their enjoyment of civ
liberties on the same footing with the Han people
of the right to elect and to be elected; of the freedo
to maintain or change their traditional ways of life
their religious beliefs, their customs and habits; o
the right to engage in any occupation and to joi
popular organizations. National minorities may us
their own languages, if any, when carrying o
litigation in court or in other matters.

The people's governments of all levels should mos
carefully see to it that national minorities enjoy equa
rights in their respective areas and should give the
all necessary and appropriate assistance in actua
practice. The national minorities have the right t
bring complaints to the people's governments, in cas
they meet with national discrimination or insult; th
people's governments must not fail in their duty o
be perfunctory in settling such complaints.

Such legal protection must also be afforded th
Han or any other nationality who live within auton
omous regions of national minorities.

V. DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONALITIES—POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND CULTURAL

The general adoption of the system of regiona
autonomy for nationalities and of democratic-coalitio
governments of nationalities, together with th

assurance in every respect of the right to national equality, does not imply that the national question is already solved. The real solution of our national question has to await the emergence of the national minorities from their political, economic and cultural backwardness which, for them, is a kind of historical liability. It is this backwardness which has hampered their full enjoyment of the right to national equality. According to Comrade Stalin, this situation constitutes "actual inequality."

The policy of the People's Republic of China towards nationalities not only ensures equal rights for all different nationalities in their political, economic, cultural and social life, but also helps them to develop in all these fields, so that they will gradually emerge out of their backwardness into actual equality.

Since the foundation of the People's Republic of China, the Central People's Government and the local people's governments concerned have shown the greatest solicitude for the national minorities' political, economic, and cultural life. Despite the fact that China's economy was still in the process of rehabilitation and that building up the nation's defences was necessarily the most important of the tasks of the state, the people's governments of all levels did much in the last two years for the national minorities in giving them political education; establishing state power; training and assigning cadres; assisting their trade; establishing health services; and fostering other phases of their economy, culture, and education. Even greater progress is expected in 1952.

On the elimination of the "actual inequality" of China's nationalities, *i.e.*, overcoming the political, economic, and cultural backwardness of the national minorities, our opinion is as follows:

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(1) This question can be solved only step by step, and through prolonged and persistent efforts. It is impossible at once to expect too much, or too quick results.

(2) Urgent problems facing the various nationalities that are ripe for solution should be disposed of by all means. Generally speaking, these problems include the establishment of state power, the training of cadres, trade, health services and the development of local production. Speaking specifically, each national autonomous region, or an area where national minorities live in a compact community, has its own differing urgent needs. These needs in material and cultural life should be dealt with at once by all possible means according to actual conditions.

(3) Stress should be laid on the nation's defences and the development of the various nationalities. Certain important phases of capital construction should be tackled in accordance with the country's financial condition.

(4) The question is one of gradual solution requiring unity and mutual assistance among the nationalities, first and foremost the assistance of the Han people and of the People's Liberation Army both of whom have the duty to assist the minorities. In turn, the national minorities should appreciate such help rendered.

(5) The "actual inequality" of China's national minorities can be done away with gradually only through stimulating their capacities and intellect. Consequently, reforms are necessary and indispensable in the various old systems within national autonomous regions. However, such reforms should accord with the wishes of, and in the main be carried out by, the

people of the different nationalities and their leaders in touch with the people.

One urgent problem facing us is that of creating a written language for those nationalities who have only a distinct spoken language of their own, but not a written one. I wish comrades here would put forward suggestions on this problem for the consideration of the Central People's Government.

VI. TRAINING OF CADRES FROM AMONG THE NATIONAL MINORITIES

The training of national minority cadres who have close contact with their own people on the widest possible scale is the key to a satisfactory implementation of the policy of carrying out regional autonomy for nationalities, forming democratic-coalition governments of nationalities and pressing forward their political, economic, cultural and educational development.

The people's governments at all levels which paid close attention to this key issue have achieved much in this direction. However, this still remains a serious task which we must carry out systematically. I am making the following proposals for your consideration.

(1) We must see to it that solidarity is achieved between all patriotic intellectuals among the various nationalities, activists among the masses, and other leading personalities in close contact with the people. We must rally these three types of cadres to work in common for the people, give free play to their abilities, and help them improve themselves.

(2) We must adopt a system to train these cadres in order to raise their cultural and political levels.

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(3) We must bring about a proper division of labour among local training classes, institutes for nationalities in different localities, secondary schools, higher institutions, and technical training classes. Local training classes shall undertake extensive elementary training; institutes for nationalities shall train more advanced political workers and translators; secondary schools and higher institutions shall give training to intellectuals, teachers and specialists; technical training classes shall furnish the lower levels of technical personnel. Such classes, institutes and schools shall be established by the people's governments of all levels (including the people's governments in national autonomous regions), their commissions of nationalities affairs, their educational and business departments. Outlines of courses in political science, history, etc., should be drawn up and the courses established step by step.

(4) Our aim is to secure the participation of Han cadres in this work. Past experience has borne out that one of the important factors in developing political, economic, cultural, and educational work among national minorities is co-operation and mutual assistance between Han cadres and cadres from the national minorities in the area. It is necessary, however, that the Han cadres should be conscientious in helping to train cadres from among national minorities.

VII. CONSOLIDATION OF UNITY AMONG NATIONALITIES

With the expulsion of the aggressive imperialist powers, the overthrow of reactionary Kuomintang rule and of the system of national oppression, disunity

among our nationalities has become a thing of the past. As I said earlier, on the very day the People's Republic of China was established, all nationalities in our country formed one big family, each member living in fraternal co-operation with all others, on the basis of equality and free will. During the past two years, the different nationalities within this big family have steadily tightened the bonds between them. They now form an indivisible group, a fact over which all of us must rejoice.

The consolidation of the unity among our various nationalities is inseparable from the consolidation and unification of our country as a whole, from the consolidation of the great historic victory won by the people of all our nationalities over imperialism and its lackeys. The consolidation of the unity among nationalities serves to stimulate them to mutual assistance, and accelerates the development and build-up of the whole country; at the same time, it facilitates their political, economic, cultural, and educational development.

But since obstacles in the path of unity have not all been completely uprooted, consolidation of the unity among nationalities still remains an important task. Such obstacles are:

First, destructive attempts by the enemy—that is, by imperialism and its lackeys—to incite discord and sow dissension among our nationalities. Our fraternal nationalities in the border regions, from the Northwest to the Southwest, are especially exposed to, and constantly confronted with, this threat. The chief method of combatting these destructive attempts is to expose the enemy, punish the counter-revolutionaries, and intensify the patriotic education of our people

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(particularly in the patriotic meaning of the movement to resist U.S. aggression and aid Korea).

Secondly, remnants of dominant-nation chauvinism and narrow nationalism among the various nationalities. Remnants of dominant-nation (primarily Great Han) chauvinism find expression in discrimination against, or contempt of, national minorities; neglect or disdain of the national characteristics and forms of the minorities. (Dominant-nation chauvinism also survives to some extent among certain national minorities occupying majority positions within a certain region.) Such remnants of Great Han chauvinism lead to reckless adventurism in matters of policy, while cadres become coercive and domineering in their working style, monopolizing all activities in the name of the masses. Remnants of narrow nationalism are more or less found among the national minorities. These remnants find expression in conservatism and xenophobia; lack of appreciation for China's greatness and progress; lack of vision in appreciating the future of their own nationality; satisfaction with things as they are; inertia to move forward; and a propensity to hinder their own national progress. Dominant-nation chauvinism and narrow nationalism often interact and are inseparable from each other. To ascertain which of the two is the decisive tendency, we have to take into consideration concrete conditions at a specific time and place.

A most important measure for eliminating the remnants of dominant-nation chauvinism and narrow nationalism is further education in patriotism and internationalism of all the nationalities. At the same time, the advanced elements of the major nationalities, first of all, of the Han nationality, should be asked to take the responsibility of criticizing tendencies

towards dominant-nation chauvinism among their own people. Cadres of Han nationality, in particular, should be asked to set examples in their actions. Apart from a determination to serve the national minorities with heart and soul, all Han cadres working in national minority areas should at all times and on all questions adopt a working style of consultation with the government workers of national minority origin, securing their concurrence, and relying on them for execution of all decisions. Arbitrary action and monopolizing all undertakings in the name of the masses should be done away with. This is one aspect of the problem.

Another aspect is that advanced elements among the national minorities should be asked to take the responsibility of criticizing the various tendencies towards narrow nationalism among their own people and of teaching them to broaden their vision, to welcome progress and to strive towards self-improvement. If both sides rely on and advance such self-education and self-reform, then tendencies towards dominant-nation chauvinism and narrow nationalism will, both in their rise and growth, be prevented or rectified in good time and in the proper place.

Thirdly, disunity still exists among certain national minorities. The causes of such disunity are numerous, *e.g.*, traditional enmity, incitement by counter-revolutionaries, manipulations by schemers among the socially higher strata, conflicts of material interests, etc. The people's governments at higher levels should, with due consideration of the differing conditions, bring about reconciliation and persuade the two sides involved to settle such disputes by means of self-criticism and mutual concessions.

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For all these reasons, the consolidation of the unity among China's nationalities remains a very important task for the people of all nationalities, especially all cadres of national minority origin.

Rally around Chairman Mao Tse-tung and the Central People's Government!

Long live our great homeland, wherein many nationalities in fraternal co-operation constitute one big family!

Long live Chairman Mao Tse-tung, great leader of all the nationalities of China!

REPORT ON THE GENERAL PROGRAMME FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF REGIONAL AUTONOMY FOR NATIONALITIES[1]

Ulanfu

Vice-Chairman of the Commission of Nationalities Affairs

Mr. Chairman, Vice-Chairmen and Members:

I wish to report briefly on the drafting procedure and the essential contents of the Draft General Programme for the Implementation of Regional Autonomy for Nationalities.

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Central People's Government has persistently established regional autonomy for nationalities, adhering to the policy towards nationalities as laid down in the Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference: "Regional autonomy shall be exercised in areas where national minorities are concentrated."

Statistics show that by June this year (1952) 130 national autonomous regions of differing levels, inhabited by four and a half million people of various nationalities, had been established throughout the country. National autonomous regions are also to be set up by the respective people's governments of a higher level in many other areas where national minorities are concentrated.

Entirely new conditions, never before known in Chinese history, are being created in areas inhabited by national minorities who now enjoy regional

1 This report was made on August 8, 1952 at the 18th Meeting of the Central People's Government Council.

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autonomy and are exercising their rights as masters of their own fate. The autonomous regions are being developed politically, economically, culturally and educationally to a remarkable degree according to the wishes of the nationalities concerned. The people's living conditions have improved and are being further improved. Political consciousness is rising; the people's love for Chairman Mao Tse-tung and their homeland is heightened by all that is happening day by day. They have great faith in their country, a big, multi-national family based on equality, solidarity and fraternal co-operation. The people of various nationalities living in areas where autonomy for nationalities is not yet established are equally full of hope and confidence as they are looking forward to this new epoch in their own history.

These circumstances show what brilliant achievements have been made since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in applying the policy towards nationalities. They demonstrate the greatness of this policy put forward by Chairman Mao Tse-tung and the Communist Party of China and laid down in the Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. It is a policy that can correctly solve the national question within China's boundaries, consolidate the unity and co-operation among her nationalities, and ensure that they will march shoulder to shoulder towards a prosperous and happy life.

In implementing regional autonomy, we all felt that a law governing the process was needed, so that regional autonomy could gradually be established in accordance with such a law in national minority areas and the policy towards nationalities, as laid down in the Common Programme, be carried out correctly in

all autonomous regions. The enactment of such a law was an epoch-making event in our country. The directives issued by Chairman Mao Tse-tung and the Central People's Government concerning various important questions of principle in the implementation of regional autonomy for nationalities and the experiences gained in actual work provided the basis for the enactment of such a law.

The Commission of Nationalities Affairs of the Central People's Government, in accordance with the decision of the Government Administration Council, was therefore able to call, last December, an enlarged meeting of the second session of the Commission which was in the nature of a representative conference of the country's nationalities. This meeting summed up the experiences gained in the implementation of regional autonomy for nationalities in all areas and achieved unity in views on the question of regional autonomy for nationalities, with emphasis on certain important questions that require attention in its implementation. The most important fact of this meeting was that a Draft General Programme for the Implementation of Regional Autonomy for Nationalities was put forward. In order to obtain as many opinions as possible, the Government Administration Council circulated this draft among the Greater Administrative Areas and provinces concerned. On February 22 this year, the draft was discussed and adopted by the Government Administration Council at its 125th Administrative Meeting. A panel discussion on the draft was held on August 3 by the Political and Legal Affairs Section and the Nationalities Affairs Section of the First National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Con-

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ference. Now it is before the Central People's Government Council for examination and approval.

Regarding this draft, I would like to stress the following points:

(1) What Does Regional Autonomy for Nationalities Mean?

Regional autonomy for nationalities is the fundamental policy laid down by Chairman Mao Tse-tung for the solution of China's national question through the application of Marxist-Leninist theory. It means regional autonomy practised within the boundaries of the People's Republic of China under the unified leadership of the Central People's Government. It is established in accordance with the general line of the Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, based on areas inhabited by national minorities. Adhering to this general principle and major premise, all national minorities who live in compact communities have the right to regional autonomy, to establish autonomous regions and organs, and to manage their own internal affairs according to the wishes of the great majority of their people and of the leaders in touch with the people. Regional autonomy means the right of national minorities to be their own masters.

For lack of an over-all and correct understanding of regional autonomy for nationalities, some cadres of Han nationality in certain areas used to entertain doubts and misgivings about the implementation of national autonomy for nationalities. Some asked for instance: Why must we establish regional autonomy while national oppression has already been eliminated, and national equality put in its place? Since we believe in progress towards universal harmony, why should we now bring about regional autonomy for

nationalities? Will its implementation not foster narrow nationalism? Will it not hinder the political, economic, and cultural development of the autonomous regions? These cadres did not understand that, just because we wanted to wipe out completely the enmity and misunderstandings among nationalities left over from a long history of national oppression and to safeguard the right to national equality, that regional autonomy for nationalities must be put into effect. It is just because we want all nationalities to go forward together into a future where all mankind shall live in peace, because we want to eliminate narrow nationalism, and because we want to hasten and enhance the political, economic and cultural development of areas inhabited by national minorities that we must establish regional autonomy for nationalities.

On the other hand, there are also some people among the national minorities themselves who grossly misunderstand the meaning of regional autonomy for nationalities. For instance, some tend to think that regional autonomy means independence and self-government without leadership by the people's government of a higher level. Some regard regional autonomy as mere autonomy without any democracy. Others believe that, with regional autonomy, they have nothing more to do with the Han people. Still others are afraid that, when regional autonomy is established, the Han cadres who have been helping them in their work wholeheartedly might leave them.

We have given explanations and carried out an educational campaign to dispel such doubts, misgivings and misunderstandings. This explanatory work should be continued in future.

(2) The Question of National Composition in Autonomous Regions.

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Where should regional autonomy for nationalities be practised? As stipulated in the Common Programme, it should be practised in all areas where national minorities are concentrated. However, since the areas in China where national minorities are concentrated are not very clearly demarcated, national composition in autonomous regions raises a complex and serious question. Its proper solution will facilitate the solution of the question of demarcation of autonomous regions and of the question regarding the regions' administrative status.

What principle should guide us in the question of national composition in autonomous regions? The Draft General Programme provides that this question be dealt with in accordance with existing relations among the various nationalities, with economic conditions and historical relations in areas where different nationalities are concentrated, and on the basis of national equality and the free will of the nationalities concerned. In the past, some areas emphasized national relations and neglected their economic conditions and historical relations; others emphasized historical relations and neglected relations among the nationalities and economic conditions; while economic conditions were generally neglected in all areas. This attitude is utterly incorrect.

If we consider national composition in accordance with the principles set out above, we shall have—and in fact we already have—three kinds of autonomous regions, namely: (1) autonomous regions established on the basis of an area inhabited by one national minority; (2) autonomous regions established on the basis of an area inhabited by one large national minority, and including certain areas inhabited by other national minorities with respectively very small

populations; (3) autonomous regions jointly established on the basis of two or more areas, each inhabited by a different national minority. This third type of autonomous government may be set up in areas where different nationalities live side by side. This is beneficial to mutual co-operation among them and, in the end, beneficial to the development of all the nationalities.

There is another important aspect to the question of national composition in autonomous regions, that is, the question of the Han inhabitants. According to our experiences in various areas, the Draft General Programme provides that those autonomous regions which adjoin areas inhabited by the Han people may, on the basis of economic and political requirements, include part of the Han areas, cities and towns. Under special conditions, such areas may include a considerable number of Han people. This practice is beneficial both to national solidarity and to the general development of the autonomous regions.

However, it must be brought about with the approval of the nationalities concerned through joint discussion. Much of this work needs great patience and should not be done in a summary fashion or through coercion.

(3) Autonomous Organs and Autonomous Rights in Autonomous Regions.

The autonomous organ in a national autonomous region is a local government, the administrative status of which corresponds to the level of the autonomous region. It should be established and organized according to the basic principles of democratic centralism and the system of people's congresses. As to the concrete form which the autonomous organ shall take, the wishes of the great majority of people in

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the autonomous region and of leading personalities in touch with the people must be respected, so that it will conform to the present stage of development of these national minorities and be easily understood and willingly accepted by them. The autonomous organ shall be mainly composed of people of the nationality exercising the right to regional autonomy, but an appropriate number of persons of other nationalities in the autonomous region must also be included.

The ten articles of the Draft General Programme concerning autonomous rights in a given autonomous region deal with the different aspects of its political, economic and cultural life. Those are the rights which an autonomous region should enjoy and which the state should grant. They are in complete conformity with the aspirations of the people of the national autonomous regions and the interests common to our people throughout the country. When these rights are correctly and fully exercised, the enthusiasm and initiative of the people in the autonomous regions will be fully developed, national solidarity will be strengthened and, consequently, the nationalities in such areas will have a wide scope for development. The people's governments of a higher level should, therefore, safeguard these autonomous rights and help realize them. In accordance with the principle of national equality, these autonomous rights should be equally enjoyed by all national autonomous regions, irrespective of size or administrative status. However, the scope for the exercise of autonomous rights in a given autonomous region should be commensurate with its administrative status.

(4) Relations Among Nationalities in the Autonomous Regions, and the Principle of Leadership of the People's Governments at Higher Levels.

National equality characterizes the one basic principle governing the articles of the Draft General Programme concerning relations among nationalities in autonomous regions. The exercise of autonomous rights in all national autonomous regions, the consolidation of autonomous organs, and the development of the autonomous regions are all dependent on friendly co-operation among the various nationalities, their continually rising political consciousness and organizational readiness. Consequently, these factors are also dependent on whether the autonomous organs of national autonomous regions can ensure the right to national equality for all, and whether they can inculcate in the people a sense of patriotism and internationalism.

The people's governments at higher levels should attach importance to their leadership over national autonomous regions, as it plays a decisive role in establishing and developing these regions. So far as the method of leadership is concerned, the people's governments at higher levels should properly gauge the characteristics and concrete conditions of the national minorities at the present stage of development, so that their directives and orders may conform to these and to the basic spirit of the Common Programme. The practice of applying summarily to one region the experiences and measures of others should be avoided and, where necessary, corrected.

These are in simple terms the important questions involved in the General Programme for the Implementation of Regional Autonomy for Nationalities.

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In the past, China's national minorities were subjected to brutal discrimination. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, they, too, have stood up, emancipated. It is my belief that the adoption and promulgation of a document of such great historic significance as the General Programme for the Implementation of Regional Autonomy for Nationalities will herald an unlimited future, bright with the happiness for the people of the various nationalities. All national minorities throughout the country will rejoice over this event and express their ever-increasing gratitude to the Central People's Government and to Chairman Mao Tse-tung.

I await your instructions after you have examined and discussed my report.

THREE YEARS OF SUCCESSFUL WORK AMONG CHINA'S NATIONALITIES

Liu Ke-ping

Vice-Chairman of the Commission of Nationalities Affairs

The implementation of Chairman Mao Tse-tung's policy towards nationalities since the founding of the People's Republic of China has produced outstanding results. Patriotism and political consciousness have risen among the people of all nationalities. Their fraternal relations based on equality, unity, friendship and co-operation have been greatly improved. Now united into one big family of the great Motherland, they have developed politically, economically and culturally to a hitherto impossible extent. With each passing day, their livelihood has steadily improved.

First of all, equal rights have been established for all nationalities, and the policy of regional autonomy for nationalities has been carried out. On August 9 this year, the Central People's Government promulgated the General Programme of the People's Republic of China for the Implementation of Regional Autonomy for Nationalities, which sums up the experiences gained in the past three years in carrying out this policy. Up to the end of June 1952, 130 autonomous regions had been established. Some are of special region or county level, others of district or *hsiang* level. Regional autonomy has been introduced even in areas inhabited by national minorities with rather small populations, like the Olunchun in Inner Mongolia and the Paoan in Northwest China. The implementation of this policy has served to strengthen the unity among

all nationalities, aroused their patriotic initiative, and advanced the work in various fields in their respective areas, thus bringing about rapid changes in all aspects of social life.

In order to protect the right to equality of national minorities in "mixed areas," *i.e.*, areas where different nationalities live together, the Government Administration Council promulgated Decisions on Measures for the Implementation of Local Democratic-Coalition Governments of Nationalities. Up to the end of June 1952, more than 200 such coalition governments had been established. Under this system, all nationalities in mixed areas participate in the exercise of local organs of state power through their own representatives in appropriate numbers. These measures have satisfied the demand for a share in state power and thus consolidated the unity among our nationalities.

Some national minority people are scattered among the Han or other nationalities. The Decisions on the Protection of the Right of All Scattered National Minority People to National Equality, as promulgated by the Government Administration Council, guarantee to such people the enjoyment of the same rights and freedoms as do the Han people or any other nationality constituting the majority of the local population. They also forbid any insults or discrimination practised against such scattered members of national minorities.

So effectively has the Central People's Government protected the right of all nationalities to political equality that national minority people throughout the country have become closely-knit members of the big family which constitutes the People's Republic of China. They demonstrate an enthusiasm and strength rising to unbelievable heights in defending and building up their country and in creating a prosperous and happy life.

Secondly, all over the country, cadres of national minority origin have been trained in large numbers. As work among the nationalities progresses and construction projects develop, the need for cadres of national minority origin becomes increasingly pressing. To meet this situation, the Government Administration Council promulgated as early as November 1950 tentative programmes for training cadres from various national minorities and for the establishment of the Central Institute for Nationalities. During the past three years, local governments have widely employed and promoted to responsible positions cadres of national minority origin. They have also established various training classes and schools for national minority cadres.

The Central Institute for Nationalities was established in Peking, with eight branches in Northwest, Southwest and Central-South China. Students come from all the nationalities of China. At present, more than sixty nationalities are represented among graduates from the Institute and its branches.

National minority students are also given priority in admission to secondary schools and higher educational institutions as an encouragement and help for them to obtain general and higher education. And quite a number have enrolled during these three years.

Simultaneously with training cadres of national minority origin, the people's governments at all levels send cadres of Han nationality to work in national minority areas wherever necessary. On the whole, these cadres have been able to work in close co-operation with both local cadres of national minority origin

and the masses; they serve the people well, and contribute greatly to the development of all activities.

Thirdly, in national minority areas trade has greatly developed; agricultural production and animal husbandry have revived and expanded. The People's Government has established state trading organs and, according to local conditions, commercial agencies such as retail departments of state trading companies, purchasing stations, and sales agencies handling on their behalf the goods produced by the national minorities. A large number of mobile units are bringing manufactured goods into such areas. These state agencies purchase products of the national minority areas in large quantities, and often at rather high prices, while supplying daily necessities at fair and reasonable prices. As a result, the rate of exchange between local products and manufactured goods from the outside is radically different now. For example, in the Miao Autonomous Region in western Hunan Province, 100 catties[1] of gall-nuts used to exchange for only 22.8 catties of table-salt before the liberation. Now the same quantity of gall-nuts exchanges for 76.8 catties of salt. Take Sinkiang Province as another example. In pre-liberation days, 1,794 catties of wheat or 119 catties of wool exchanged for one bolt of cotton cloth, whereas in the first half of 1952, one bolt of cloth cost only 237 catties of wheat or 32 catties of wool.

The volume of business done by state trading organs in national minority areas is expanding. According to preliminary statistics compiled by the Northwest Regional Office of the China Animal By-Products Corporation, state trading organs purchased in the four

1 One catty equals ½ kilogramme.

provinces of Chinghai, Ningsia, Kansu and Shensi alone more than 4,860,000 catties of wool during the first half of 1952, an increase of 60.37 per cent over the corresponding period of the previous year. In the process of expanding their operations, the state trading companies also conducted organizational work and provided the leadership for the production of local and special goods in national minority areas. They are helping the national minority people to improve the quality of their products and to adopt common standards therefor. They are thereby facilitating the development of local and special products and securing them wider markets. For example, only 75-85 per cent of the processed wool exported from Sinkiang last year was up to internationally standardized specifications, whereas this year the first shipment of processed wool from Mongolia and Kuche in Sinkiang more than fulfilled such specifications. Formerly, only 23 local and special products were exported from the national minority areas of Southwest China; this number has now risen to over 150.

In order to meet the demand for trade in national minority areas, the state trading organs in various parts of the country have taken the lead in encouraging private merchants to trade with these areas. The national minority people are also assisted to develop their own trade through holding regular fairs and reviving those that had been allowed to discontinue.

With leadership and assistance from the state-owned economy, co-operative societies have also been extensively developed in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region.

There is now a voluminous exchange of goods between national minority areas and other parts of the country. From Lhasa in Tibet merchants carry

medicinal herbs like fritillaries and cordyceps, musk, woollen cloth made from yak hair, and other local products as far as Lichiang, Yunnan Province in the Southwest, and Hsiaho (Labrang) in Kansu Province in the Northwest. Today aluminium pots and pans from Shanghai, porcelain ware from Kiangsi, and ivory carvings from Canton are on sale in Labrang, while dried Hami melons and raisins from Sinkiang are obtainable in Shanghai and Canton.

To help the national minorities revive and develop agricultural production, the People's Government assists them to reclaim wasteland in their areas so as to expand the arable acreage. Repairs and new water conservancy projects have been undertaken to prevent floods and droughts. Soil amelioration is looked after; the intensive and careful cultivation of land is being promoted; and technical guidance is provided to raise the yield per hectare. Loans have been made to the people in times of emergency, and to relieve the shortage of capital needed for production. As a result, agricultural production has soared tremendously in the national minority areas. The yield per hectare has on the average risen 10 to 100 per cent; and in some localities is now as much as three or four times what it was before. In some of the national minority areas, the People's Government has set up state farms which provide guidance for the peasants through advanced farming methods. The people of the Tibetan Autonomous Region in Sikang have, with the state farm guidance, put forth a plan to increase their grain output by 2,000 tons in 1952.

Much has also been done in developing animal husbandry in the national minority areas. The People's Government has striven to ensure the rational utilization of pastures among the different nationalities and clans, and has provided the herdsmen with loans to store up fodder for the winter season. The herdsmen have been mobilized to repair and build stables and cattle pens, to improve feeding methods, and for the prevention and cure of animal diseases. In localities short of water and grass, the herdsmen are mobilized to plant and improve the grazing grounds and to sink wells. Artificial insemination of cattle has been introduced, and steps taken to improve breeds in some of the key districts. In Northwest China and the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, where animal husbandry holds an important place in the economy, cattle herds have greatly increased. In the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, for example, the number of cattle now is almost double that of 1945, the year of liberation.

Other productive efforts, such as handicrafts, afforestation, and subsidiary occupations, have also been considerably encouraged. In some areas, like the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region and Sinkiang, the development of modern industry has begun.

In introducing social reforms, government's policy has been one of steady advance under constant, careful consideration. Reforms are undertaken only when the majority of the people and their leaders in touch with the masses so desire, and are carried out mainly by the national minority people themselves. It was through such a policy that the landlords were made to reduce rents and refund land-rent deposits in many agricultural areas. In some localities, the land reform has already been introduced. In pastoral areas, where the capitalist mode prevails in animal husbandry, the policy has been to consider the benefit of both the owners and their hired hands. At the same time, steps are being taken to abolish the proprietors' feudal

privileges, and to arouse their enthusiasm for more production, in order to develop animal husbandry.

Fourthly, cultural, educational and public health activities are on the increase.

In the past, disease was responsible for a high mortality rate among many national minorities. The prevention and cure of disease was, therefore, one of their most urgent needs.

To meet this pressing need, the Central People's Government initiated health services on an extensive scale. Subsidies for this purpose, allocated at various times, have reached total of over 109,200 million yuan. By early 1952, 187 health centres and clinics had been set up or put back into service in counties where the national minority is concentrated, and many such centres and clinics were established also in counties where various nationalities live.

To improve health work, the Ministry of Public Health and public health organizations in various localities have sent more than 50 teams to Northwest, Southwest, Central-South China and the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, to give free medical treatment to the sick in national minority areas. The medical staff of the People's Liberation Army have also lent their enthusiastic aid. After the peaceful liberation of Tibet, the Ministry of Public Health immediately despatched medical units there and appropriated thousands of millions of yuan to finance health services among the Tibetan people. Now mobile public health and medical service teams travel all over the areas inhabited by national minorities, despite all sorts of difficulties. They penetrate deep into the grasslands to the remotest frontiers, treat the sick and save the dying. Such activities receive the most enthusiastic welcome of national minority people in those

areas. Besides treating actual cases, the teams also conduct health and sanitation propaganda and promote energetically mother and child-care services.

Because epidemics used to scourge the national minority areas, the People's Government has laid special emphasis on the prevention as well as treatment of endemic diseases. Thus, in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, many stations have been set up for the prevention and treatment of plague. Centres for the prevention and treatment of venereal disease have been set up in the Inner Mongolian and the Sikang Tibetan Autonomous Regions. Malaria prevention and treatment stations have been established in the provinces of Yunnan and Kweichow. This method of prevention and treatment at focal points has produced very important results. For instance, in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, plague which used to be prevalent in the past is now virtually wiped out; roughly over 70 per cent of the syphilis cases treated are cured. According to a survey made in the Chenpaerhu Banner[1] for the period of January to May 1951, the birth rate in that Banner was 79 per cent higher than in the corresponding period of 1950.

The national minorities have also been given assistance in their educational development. In certain areas good progress has already been made. In the Northeast, for instance, 92 per cent of school-age children of Korean nationality are now attending school. In some areas the number of schools has increased rapidly. For example, the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region now has more than three times the peak number of primary schools during Japanese occupation. Some nationalities, like the Olunchun

1 An administrative unit equivalent to a county.

who had no schools at all in the past, now attend their own schools. Sinkiang and the Yenpien Korean National Autonomous Regions have not only primary and secondary schools, but also institutions of higher education. The winter-school movement has been developed on a mass scale in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region and in Sinkiang.

Great importance is attached now to the development of the languages of national minorities. The Committee of Cultural and Educational Affairs of the Government Administration Council has set up a special committee to study the spoken and written languages of the national minorities, to organize and guide research in that field. This committee will help create written languages for those nationalities having no written languages of their own and improve existing written languages of others. The creation of a written language for the Yi people of Sikang Province marks the beginning of such work. The People's Government is also using existing favourable conditions to full advantage for publications in the languages of national minorities.

The Commission of Nationalities Affairs has published over 700,000 volumes of books and magazines in the Mongolian, Tibetan and Uighur languages. Definite progress has also been made in developing local newspapers and publications in minority languages. Broad sections of the Mongolian, Tibetan, Uighur, Kazakh and Korean people can now read in their own language Marxist-Leninist classics and Mao Tse-tung's works, documents of the Central People's Government, books on scientific and technological subjects, as well as literary works. In Sinkiang Province, the *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* have appeared in Uighur and Kazakh.

Broadcasts and films in the languages of national minorities are also encouraged. Artists and writers are studying and reviving, in the light of the principles of literature and art enunciated by Chairman Mao Tse-tung, the best artistic traditions among China's national minorities whose love for music and dance is well-known.

The customs and religious beliefs of national minorities are fully respected. The Preparatory Conference of the Chinese Islamic Association, held in Peking in July 1952 and attended by Moslems of ten nationalities, is convincing proof of the freedom of religion that national minorities enjoy.

Fifthly, regular visits to national minorities have been organized by the Central People's Government, while representatives of national minorities have come to see Peking and many other places in the country.

Four groups have, so far, been sent by the Central People's Government to national minority areas in Southwest, Northwest, Central-South and Northeast China, as well as to the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region. The mission of each group has been to familiarize itself with conditions in the given area, and to improve fraternal relations through such personal visits. Local people's governments have paid similar visits to national minorities in areas under their jurisdiction. At the same time, various national minorities have sent delegations to Peking to pay their respects to Chairman Mao Tse-tung and the Central People's Government and to make a personal study of the gigantic construction projects of the country. These mutual visits are of great significance for strengthening the unity among nationalities and raising the patriotic consciousness of the national minority people.

This, in brief, is an outline of the work done among and for China's nationalities during the past three years, since the founding of the People's Republic of China.

Like the Han people, with whom they are now on an equal footing and with whom they enjoy equal rights, the people of China's national minorities are participating with unprecedented enthusiasm in all our country's projects of construction and development. Special mention should be made here that in the great movement to resist U.S. aggression and aid Korea, the ranks of the Chinese People's Volunteers have been swelled by many of national minority origin; and all national minorities have been enthusiastic participants in the patriotic campaign for increased production and donations to the Chinese People's Volunteers. The national minorities have signed the Stockholm Appeal and the Appeal for a Five-Power Peace Pact; they have voted against U.S. remilitarization of Japan, and protested against bacteriological warfare waged by the U.S.A., demonstrating great energy and zeal in all these campaigns in defence of world peace. China's national minorities show a deep hatred for the aggressors with U.S. imperialism at their head, but they cherish profound friendship for all the peace-loving peoples of the world.

All these are achievements testifying to the fact that the correct leadership of Chairman Mao Tse-tung, the Chinese Communist Party and the Central People's Government, has raised the patriotic enthusiasm and political consciousness of the different national minorities in China to a remarkable degree and that, thanks to the solidarity of all nationalities, our country is strong as never before.